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SIPDIS

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TAGS: [POL](#) [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [IZ](#)

SUBJECT: PROMINENT MUTHANNA CANDIDATE ACCUSES FOES OF VOTE  
BUYING AND INFLUENCE PEDALING IN PROVINCIAL ELECTIONS

Classified By: PRT LEADER BRADLEY LYNCH FOR REASONS 1.4 (b) AND (d).

¶1. (U) This is a Muthanna PRT reporting cable.

¶2. (SBU) SUMMARY: Independent Provincial Council (PC) member Hakim Khazal Khashan is campaigning in earnest for re-election. In a meeting with the PRT Muthanna Team Leader, Hakim discussed his party's list, alleged that provincial officials are using their offices to influence voters, accused ISCI and the Al Zayad tribe of vote-buying, and supported a visible U.S. presence on election day. While most consider Hakim an honest and capable politician, his long stay in Europe, where his immediate family still lives, may cause voters to question his commitment to Muthanna. END SUMMARY.

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HAKIM,S LIST  
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¶3. (SBU) Hakim Khazal Khashan, leader of the Middle Euphrates Gathering political entity, List 262, met with the PRT Team Leader to discuss the upcoming provincial elections. He presented the PRT with a copy of his party's political poster, recently displayed on the front page of Muthanna's weekly newspaper, and which will soon be plastered all over the province. On the right side is a large picture of Hakim superimposed on a crowd scene from his recent anti-corruption rally in Samawah. On the left are smaller photos of his 25 running mates. (NOTE: Based upon population, there will be 26 seats on the new Muthanna Provincial Council, down from ¶41. END NOTE). The seven women on the list opted to have only their names displayed on the poster.

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INFLUENCE PEDALING AND VOTE BUYING  
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¶4. (C) Hakim claimed that provincial government officials are using their public offices to secure votes in the upcoming election. He cited increased welfare payments, government-subsidized cement authorizations, and infrastructure projects as some of the carrots officials are using. When asked for examples of vote-buying, Hakim named the Al Zayad tribe, whose top candidate is Mohammad Radhi Sultan al-Zayadi, and the ISCI party. He charged that ISCI recently paid 11,000 popular committee members a \$400 monthly stipend, promising that these payments will continue after the election if their party is successful.

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ELECTION MONITORING  
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¶5. (SBU) Hakim's party plans to have 250 election monitors at polling stations around Muthanna; ten will be selected by each of his 25 running mates. Unlike many of the political leaders with whom the PRT has spoken recently, Hakim supports a visible U.S. presence on election day. He believes that it would reduce the likelihood of intimidation and corruption

while building voter confidence.

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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE  
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¶6. (SBU) As a teenager in the 1980s, Hakim fled to Europe with his family. He lived in Germany and studied engineering in Switzerland. His wife, a German citizen, and his two children live in Germany and have no plans to move to Iraq. Hakim and his father Khazal Khashan, a U.S. citizen, were part of the Iraqi Opposition Conference in London in 2002. He also worked closely with the CPA, helping to make Muthanna the first province in Iraq with a Provincial Council. In 2006, Hakim returned to Germany due to illness. He came back to Iraq a year later, after Governor Hassani's assassination, and resumed his duties on the Provincial Council. Hakim is widely viewed in Muthanna (including the PRT) as an honest, independent politician and a capable leader. However, with his immediate family in Europe, his father in the United States, and a recent one-year absence from Iraq, voters may doubt his commitment to Muthanna. END COMMENT.  
CROCKER